

AAAL Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom  
Thursday, February 5, 2026  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM ET

### **Minutes**

**Present:** Ryuko Kubota, President; Manka Varghese, President-Elect; Mari Haneda, 1<sup>st</sup> VP; Francis Hult, 2<sup>nd</sup> VP; Paula Winke, Treasurer; Amelia Tseng, JEDI Officer; Elizabeth Miller, Member-at-Large; Andy Gao, Member-at-Large; Yumi Matsumoto, Member-at-Large; Stephen Moody, Chair of OEOC; John Odudele, PhD Student; Valerie Smith, Ex Officio; Agnes He, Secretary.

### **Call to Order and Welcoming Remarks**

Ryuko welcomed all participants and called the meeting to order at 1:04 pm ET

### **Approval of Meeting Agenda**

Due to scheduling considerations, one item on the agenda (Report from the Nominating Committee) was moved to a later time slot.

**Motion:** It was moved by Ryuko and seconded by Liz to approve the revised meeting agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Approval of October 2025 EC Meeting Minutes (Exhibit #1)**

Agnes called for a motion to approve the October 2025 EC meeting minutes. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### **Report: Dissertation Award and Graduate Student Award -- Yumi Matsumoto (Exhibits 2-3)**

Yumi highlighted the suggestions outlined in the written reports (Exhibits 2-3).

Suggestions from the Dissertation Award Committee:

- It would be helpful to have an opportunity for committee members to meet before carrying out the actual work
- Results should be shared with committee members before announcement to the AAAL membership

Discussion:

- These two recommendations will be incorporated in the committee toolkit

Suggestions from the Graduate Student Awards Committee:

- Selection criteria need to be clearer and simpler
- Recommendation letters should be longer (than 1 page) to give the committee more materials to differentiate between excellent applicants
- Similarly, student's application materials (particularly CV) should be longer giving the committee more to base their selection on

Discussion:

- The current committee chair could submit a proposed rewrite of the criteria (including the length of CV and length of support letters) for the EC to vote on in March
- Each committee should pass down to future committees how they have operationalized the relevant SRs given the specific circumstances each year
- Yumi will work with Mimi Li to make a concrete proposal for revision
- Ryuko thanked Yumi for her work with the two committees

### **President's Report – Ryuko Kubota**

Main points:

- Welcome Amelia Tseng, new JEDI Officer
- Two JEDI ad hoc members have been replaced; new members are: Wesley Leonard and Sara Kangas
- Thank everyone and particularly the Business Office for hard work and strong support
- Thank Mari for hard work on the 2026 conference
- Robert Randaz requested the use of AAAL conference abstracts for research purposes. The EC decided (via email discussion) that we cannot grant this request. In March 2026 meeting, we can discuss how we can use conference abstracts responsibly.

- Next year, we will need another task force for advocacy, and another task force for online conferences, to continue our work.
- We will revisit relevant SRs in March regarding collaboration with other associations. Relatedly, Ryuko, Peter and Steve will present at TESOL this year after AAAL.
- Various Award Letters sent from the President have been revised for future use.

Discussion:

There was no discussion.

### **Financial Reports – Paula Winke (Exhibit 5)**

Main points:

- 2025 was a good year, with expenses within budgets and revenues increased.

Discussion:

- Credit card charges – is there a way to avoid them? Bank transfers also incur costs (transfer fees)
- Travel expenses -- early booking, public transportation, etc. can reduce expenses. Should we set limits on travel?
- We will keep looking for better payment options (other than credit card) and continue to think about reining in travel costs
- Ryuko thanked Paula for her excellent work keeping the Association’s financial health.

### **Report: 2<sup>nd</sup> VP – Francis Hult (Exhibit 6)**

### **MOTION: Approve Changes to Distinguished Public Service Award Standing Rule (Exhibit 7)**

Rationale:

- to bring SR 13 close to actual practice
- to further clarify the eligibility of the awardee
- to emphasize the public facing nature of the award

Francis moved and Manka seconded the motion.

Discussion:

- This is a much-needed proposal that will bring greater clarity and consistency
- Beyond increasing AAAL’s visibility, this award is about recognizing community engagement.
- Finetuning the proposed changes
  - wording – “administer”, not specifically “identify the candidates for the award”? – “administer” is fine.
  - content – must the recipient be “employed”? – “working” is better than “employed”.
  - content – delete references to ‘status’ of the award.
  - content - add “publicize” after “present (the award)”.

All voted in favor of the revised proposed changes to SR 13. The motion passed unanimously. The new SR 13 reads:

#### DISTINGUISHED PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD COMMITTEE

##### 1. Purpose

- a) The purpose of the Distinguished Public Service Award Committee is to administer the Distinguished Public Service Award (DPSA). The DPSA recognizes non-academics outside of the field of applied linguistics whose work (1) raises public awareness of important social issues connected to language and (2) makes exceptional contributions to the promotion of multilingualism, linguistic justice, and language-related human rights.

##### 2. Membership

- a) The committee is made up of five members, two of whom are elected, two of whom are appointed, and one of whom is an AAAL Executive Committee member.
- b) The chair of the committee is appointed prior to the general business meeting at the annual conference from among the previous year's membership. The chair is normally a committee member who has served on the committee for at least one preceding year and may have been either elected or appointed.
- c) Appointed members are appointed in consultation with the incoming chair prior to the general business meeting at the annual conference. Committee members should represent a broad range of theoretical, methodological and epistemological backgrounds. The appointments should take into consideration the strengths of the elected members in order to balance/extend the coverage of the committee as a whole.
- d) Terms of the committee members shall be three years and shall be staggered.

3. The committee shall report to the Executive Committee in advance of its midyear meeting regarding outcomes of the award cycle, as well as recommendations for the following year’s cycle.

#### 4. The Award

- a) The award is given to an individual or team whose primary occupation is non-academic, including but not limited to, writers, journalists, legislators, activists, lawyers, diplomats, or content creators. Should the award be given to a team, the team will decide which individual will accept the award on the team's behalf.
- b) The award will be in the form of a plaque or statuette in addition to a monetary award of \$1000 to the individual or designated entity. An effort shall be made to present and publicize the award in a public forum that benefits the visibility of AAAL and the awardee(s).

#### 5. Nominations

- a) The DPSA committee should develop a plan of action to solicit nominations. Nominations can be solicited from the AAAL membership and can also come out of the DPSA committee discussions. The committee is encouraged to draw on resources such as the Applied Linguistics and Social Justice listserv to solicit nominations.

#### 6. Eligibility

- a) The awardee(s) must be primarily working in a field other than academia (i.e., not university/college/school staff, faculty, or administration) and may not be a member of AAAL currently or within the past five years. Nominees may be considered if they engage in part-time academic work (e.g., as an adjunct) provided that their primary occupation is non-academic and the contributions for which they are being nominated cannot be construed by the DPSA Committee as falling within the scope of academic service.
- b) To avoid any appearance of endorsement, individuals currently running for public office may not be nominated.
- c) The contributions of the nominee must be high-profile, constituting an exceptional positive impact on multilingualism, linguistic justice, or language-related human rights on a regional, national, and/or international scale.

#### 7. Timeline

- a) The committee will attempt to make an award annually. If there are no nominations, the committee can choose to award less frequently.
- b) March: Call for nominations announced
- c) June 1: Nomination deadline

- d) June – July: Committee undertakes review and deliberation
  - e) July 15: Committee notifies the AAAL Business Office of the award results
  - f) July 31: Deadline for President to notify the winner
8. Notification procedures
- a) Recipient(s) shall be notified by the AAAL President.
  - b) The recipient(s) will be invited to participate in a webinar event with members sometime during the year of the award.

### **Proposed Changes to Indigenous Language Scholarship Support Fund (Exhibit 8)**

#### Rationale:

- True to the spirit of this award, Indigenous scholars need to participate in the adjudication process
- Fairer workload distribution
- Not enough info is currently included in the application.

#### Discussion:

- Is it legal to present an award for which only a demographic group are eligible? Will look into this further.
- Can a winner from the past year apply for the award again?
- Who determines how to use the funds?
- How to ascertain “Indigenous” status? Self-identification?
- What about applicants from outside the U.S.?
- Who should chair the committee? Coordinator of LMR may be problematic.
- Francis will send the proposed changes to JEDI Committee for feedback.

### **MOTION: Approve addition to SR 18 to allow for registration fee waivers. (Exhibit 9)**

This item was tabled to March 2026 EC meeting.

### **Bylaws Update – Ryuko Kubota (Exhibit 10)**

**Motion:** Replace immediate Past President with President-Elect in the following item in the Bylaw: Article VIII: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS 2. The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members of the Association in good standing and the Immediate Past President, who shall serve for one year ex officio without a vote.

Revised wording will be: The Nominating Committee shall consist of five members of the Association in good standing and President-Elect, who shall serve for one year ex officio without a vote.

Ryuko moved, Andy seconded. With one abstention, all others voted in favor. The motion carried.

### **OEOC Report – Steve Moody (Exhibits 11 and 11a)**

Discussion:

- Ryuko thanked Steve and OEOC for all the hard work that has significantly enriched the Association.
- The suggestions presented in the report will be included in the OEOC internal procedural recommendations.
- Steve will share with EC detailed information about social media via email.

**BREAK**

### **GSC Report - John Odudele (Exhibit 12)**

Discussion:

- GSC can check updated conference schedule for exact info on GSC sessions
- Ryuko thanked John and the GSC for all their hard work.

### **Nominating Committee Report – Manka Varghese (Exhibit 4)**

Discussion:

- The recommendation to increase the number of NomCo members from 12-14 to 14-16 will be reflected in the toolkit.

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### **Operations: Conferences (Exhibits 13-16)**

#### **Report: 1<sup>st</sup> VP (2026 Conference) - Mari Haneda (Exhibit 13)**

##### Discussion:

- Mari thanked the Business Office for their strong support
- Ryuko thanked Mari for all the work putting together the conference
- Safety issues for participants, both domestic and international

#### **Report: Virtual (2026 Conference) - Peter De Costa (Exhibit 14)**

- Val spoke on behalf of Peter.
- Everything is going well so far, with strong registration numbers.

#### **Report: 2<sup>nd</sup> VP (2027 Conference) - Francis Hult (Exhibit 15)**

##### Discussion:

- The number of plenaries
- The themes/topics to include and to highlight in the plenaries
- Francis will continue to work on this
- Francis will finalize the speakers before the March meeting

#### **Report: Virtual (2027 Conference) - Ryuko Kubota (Exhibit 16)**

- Manka appointed Katie Christoffersen as Chair of 2028 online conference; Katie will start shadowing the 2027 online conference team

### **Report: Book Award Committee – Liz Miller (Exhibit 17)**

##### Discussion:

- Liz will work with the Book Award Committee to propose specific improvements for the selection criteria for discussion at the March 2026 EC meeting.
- Should textbooks be included?
- In the long run, should we also include books written in non-English languages?

**AAAL's promotion of Aneta Pavlenko's Miranda Warnings Project -- Francis Hult ([Link to Translations](#))**

Discussion:

- The Business Office will create a link at the AAAL website to help promote this project
- AAAL will help promote this project in other appropriate spaces too

**Report: Accessible Conference Trends – Val Smith**

Val gave a PPT presentation, giving a comprehensive and detailed overview of the best practices aimed at enhancing conference accessibility, including before, during and after the conferences

Discussion:

- The EC thanked Val for such a thoughtful presentation, at short notice.
- Many of the practices are already included in the AAAL Inclusive Presenter Guidelines.
- What are the best practices in terms of choices for conference venues?
- What are the best practices in addressing the gap between the ideal and the financially feasible?
- Childcare and ASL interpretation continue to be important concerns.

**Review of EC Action items – Valerie Smith**

**Adjournment**

Ryuko thanked everyone for their participation and contribution.  
The meeting was adjourned at 4:34 p.m. ET

Respectfully submitted,  
Agnes He